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ABSTRACT

This workbook was prepared in order to assist public school officials in the development of appropriate procedures for the selection of educational resources, handling of complaints, and reevaluation of such material. The workbook was developed by borrowing and adapting language from selection policies from a variety of sources. Introductory material addresses related Minnesota State Board policy and regulation; the purpose of selection policies; developing a selection policy; using the workbook, and terminology. "Essential Elements of Educational Resource Selection Policies and Reevaluation Procedures," a checklist developed by the Minnesota Coalition Against Censorship, is included. The first main part of the workbook deals with policy, including objectives; freedom to read, view, and listen; and legal responsibility. Topics related to selection procedures are considered in the second part, including description of resources covered by the policy; the process used in the selection of resources; selection criteria; and recommendations for selection. The third part covers reevaluation procedures, including policy statements; the person to whom a reevaluation request is directed; information meetings; the reevaluation committee; the reevaluation process and timeline; open hearings; status of resources during the process; criteria for reevaluation; decision of the reevaluation committee; application of the decision; and appeal. Various documents needed for the process are appended. (Contains 7 references.) (ALF)

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SELECTION POLICIES and REEVALUATION PROCEDURES: a workbook

Minnesota Coalition Against Censorship
1021 West Broadway
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411

1991

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SELECTION POLICIES and REEVALUATION PROCEDURES:

a workbook

Minnesota Coalition Against Censorship
1021 West Broadway
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411

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Published by:
Minnesota Educational Media Organization
408 Quarry Lane
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Available from: MEMO, 408 Quarry Lane, Stillwater, MN 55082.
$8.00 check payable to MEMO.

Acknowledgements

The Minnesota Coalition Against Censorship developed this workbook in the same way that school districts develop selection policies, by borrowing and adapting language from policies located from a variety of sources.

The Minnesota Coalition Against Censorship understands that public documents such as selection policies are not copyrighted publications. Therefore, permission to include examples from various policies was not requested. However, we do acknowledge the contributions made by the school districts whose policies we used for examples and we thank them. We also acknowledge that the language in our examples may have been from a policy that has been revised. We selected our examples to illustrate the points we wanted to make, not to endorse school district policies, or to provide latest drafts of school district policies.

Special thanks is due the members of 1988-1989 Intellectual Freedom Committee of the American Association of School Librarians who developed the sample policy draft used in this document. The draft was not adopted by the AASL Board of Directors, nor was it published. The AASL Board of Directors at that time, operating in the spirit of Information Power determined that selection policies should be developed in partnership efforts in school districts, and in that spirit, decided that AASL would not adopt a sample policy. In our opinion, this workbook represents a method of helping the partnership efforts that AASL Directors had in mind.

As with any professional organization publication, many individuals contributed to the final product, not just the few persons who actually put the document together. We thank them. Special thanks are given to Mary Dalbotten, Minnesota Department of Education, for locating many of the examples used here. Special thanks also to Matt Stark who read and reacted to the samples, helping us to clarify our thinking.

Thank you to Marilouise Koerber and Jean Scheu who read drafts of parts of this publication.

Finally, thank you to Vicky Hudson, who prepared the document for duplication.

Fran McDonald, President
Minnesota Coalition Against Censorship
May, 1991

MINNESOTA EDUCATIONAL MEDIA ORGANIZATION

August 1, 1991

To: Workbook Readers and Users

The Minnesota Educational Media Organization in cooperation with the Minnesota Coalition Against Censorship is proud to publish this document.

We support MCAC's efforts to fight against censorship and believe that a sound selection policy is of critical importance in this time of increasing challenges to remove materials from library/media collections. A sound reevaluation process is necessary protection for all concerned. MEMO endorses the concept of selection policy development as expressed in this document.

We hope this workbook is useful in your efforts to write and adopt a material selection policy and evaluation procedure.

Judy Bull, President
Minnesota Educational Media Organization

Introduction

The Minnesota Coalition Against Censorship was founded on August 23, 1978. At the present time, nineteen organizations are members.

The purpose of the MCAC is to fight against censorship and to help expand citizens' understanding of the value of free access to information. The MCAC does this through public education activities (e.g., preparing booklets, conducting conferences, publicizing its position on controversial matters); lobbying (e.g., informing members of the Minnesota legislature, heads of libraries, school board members and superintendents of our position concerning activities in their schools which might lead to censorship and how we believe they best can prevent censorship of the educational resources used in their schools); and litigating (e.g.. primarily through the filing of amicus briefs in significant censorship cases).

This selection policy and reevaluation procedures workbook has been prepared in order to assist public school officials in the development in their schools of appropriate procedures for the selection of educational resources, and then the handling of complaints and reevaluation of that material. We believe that the process of developing in each school district appropriate policies and procedures is in itself salutory and helps educate students, teachers, administrators, parents, and other interested citizens in the importance of non-censorship of the choice of educational resources by professional educators. Appropriate reevaluation procedures allow citizens an opportunity to raise questions concerning the decisions of government officials (i.e., teachers) and allows citizens to achieve redress of their grievances. Although the school may very well not agree with complaints they should allow for a process to hear complaints and to individually review and evaluate them.

The members of the MCAC have devoted several years of work, under the leadership of Professor Fran McDonald, in the development of this workbook and hope that it serves as a legacy of the concern and interest of the delegates and members of the MCAC who participated in its production.

Of course, we're always delighted to hear comments from readers so that we might improve this booklet in future editions.

Matthew Stark, President
Minnesota Coalition Against Censorship

November 1, 1990

Minnesota Coalition Against Censorship
Member Organizations 1991

American Association of University Women, Minnesota Division
American Jewish Committee, Minnesota Division
Inter-Faculty Organization
Journalism Educators of Minnesota
Minnesota Association for Continuing Adult Education
Minnesota Association of Law Libraries
Minnesota Civil Liberties Union
Minnesota Congress of Parents, Teachers and Students
Minnesota Council for the Social Studies
Minnesota Council of Teachers of English
Minnesota Education Association
Minnesota Educational Media Organization
Minnesota Elementary School Principals Association
Minnesota Federation of Teachers
Minnesota Health Science Library Association
Minnesota Library Association
Minnesota Reading Association
National Council of Jewish Women, Minnesota Division
Upper Midwest Bookseller's Association

Minnesota Coalition Against Censorship
1021 West Broadway
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	iii
Letter from MEMO	iv
Introduction	v
Minnesota Coalition Against Censorship	vi
State Board Policy	1
State Board Rule	1
Purpose of Selection Policies	2
Developing a Selection Policy	2
Using the Workbook	3
"Essential Elements Of Educational Resource Selection Policies"	4
Terminology	6
Part I. Policy	7
Objectives	11
Freedom to Read, View, and Listen	14
Legal Responsibility	17
Part II. Selection Procedures	20
Description of Resources	21
Selection Procedures	23
Criteria	28
Resources meet established criteria	33
Recommendations for Selection	35

Part III. Reevaluation Procedures 38

Policy Statements 40
Reevaluation Procedures 42
Person to Whom Request for Reevaluation is Directed 43
Information Meeting 44
Reevaluation Committee 48
Reevaluation Process and Timeline 52
Open Hearings 56
Status of Resources During Process 59
Criteria for Reevaluation 60
Decision of Reevaluation Committee 62
Application of Decision 63
Appeal 64

Appendix

Documents 66
Forms 82

SELECTION POLICIES AND REEVALUATION PROCEDURES:

A WORKBOOK

Minnesota Coalition Against Censorship

1021 West Broadway
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411

1991

Selection Policies and Reevaluation Procedures:
Workbook

STATE BOARD POLICY

(See A Policy on the Freedom to Teach, to Learn, and to Express Ideas in the Public Schools. Page 80)

STATE BOARD RULE (3500.0710) LIBRARY MEDIA PROGRAM. (1989)

Subpart 3. Resources. There shall be provided for the curriculum of the school, up-to-date resources and the necessary equipment and technological systems to use these resources. The resources shall include a variety of formats such as books, periodicals, and projected and electronic resources, selected in accordance with a school board adopted selection policy. (Emphasis added)

The purpose of this publication is to identify essential components of selection policies and to provide guidelines for developing or revising school district educational resource selection policies. Policies, procedures, and criteria for selection and procedures for responding to challenges to resources are included. The publication is based on the "Essential Elements of Educational Resource Selection Policies and Reevaluation Procedures" checklist developed by the Minnesota Coalition Against Censorship.

Some school districts already have policies and procedures governing the selection and review of educational resources. If so, as part of a regular review, they may only need to examine their policies to determine whether essential components have been included. Other school districts, to comply with State Board Policy and State Board Rule 3500.0710, will use these guidelines to develop selection policies.

These guidelines are provided in the form of essential elements which must be included in every selection policy adopted by a Board of Education. To assist

local educators in developing selection policies, this workbook provides quoted sections from selection policies of other school districts that illustrate the essential elements. Local educators should adapt/adopt the wording to meet their own needs.

School districts must have policies covering the selection of all resources used. Although separate policies and procedures for the selection of textbooks and required resources used in the classroom may be appropriate for some school districts, the review procedure for resources about which concerns have been raised should be the same for school library media center resources and classroom resources.

Purposes of Selection Policy

Typically, an educational resources selection policy:

1. reflects the educational philosophy of the district;
2. supports curriculum objectives;
3. addresses the educational interests, abilities and learning styles of students;
4. guides in developing and maintaining quality educational resource collections;
5. explains the selection process for the school and the community;
6. explains the right of free access to information and ideas for students and teachers;
7. provides a fair and equitable process for responding to concerns and challenges raised about educational resources used in the district.

Developing a Selection Policy

Policies should be developed cooperatively by a representative committee of teachers, librarians, and administrators. Parents, students, and other community members may also be involved. The organization and wording of the educational resources selection policy should be simple, clear and to the point. The language should convey the district's philosophy and provide sufficient direction for selecting educational resources, while allowing room for choice in the selection of specific materials. The policy must be adopted by the school board. The adopted policy should then be communicated to all school personnel and to the

community. In addition, it should be evaluated and revised or reaffirmed regularly.

Using this Workbook

Essential elements of a selection policy are printed in **boldface**. Examples from a variety of school districts illustrate the essential elements. Quoted sections from school district selection policies are provided as examples only and do not imply endorsement of any policy by the MCAC or its organization members. Numbers are from the original policies. When similar words and phrases appeared in several examples, the words and phrases were provided in the first example and omitted from subsequent examples.

Each essential element begins with an introductory statement. The introduction provides the rationale for that element in a policy and also alerts persons using the workbook to factors that should be considered when writing the policy.

MCAC did not edit the examples. We have selected what we believe to be representative samples of language and concepts from a variety of school districts. Language and wording were left intact, but spacing and capitalization were modified for format and style. Some of the examples reflect language in use at the time the policy was adopted. Selection policy writing committees should examine the samples and edit or adopt language that meets needs in their school districts, following local school district policy formats.

Selection policies and reevaluation procedures have 4 parts:

1. Policy - Selection of educational resources
2. Selection procedures
3. Policy - Reevaluation of challenged educational resources
4. Reevaluation procedures

Essential Elements of Educational Resource Selection Policies and Reevaluation Procedures

A decision must be made about what the Selection Policy and Reevaluation Procedures will cover--classroom resources, library/media center resources or all resources used in the school or school district. (Whatever the decision, it should be noted that school districts must have policies covering all resources used, whether they are inclusive or separate.)

I. Selection Policy

1. Statement of the philosophy of resource selection for the school or district.

2. Statement of the objectives of resource selection.

3. Statement about intellectual freedom and the teachers' and students' constitutional rights to read, view and listen citing documents such as Library Bill of Rights, Statement on Intellectual Freedom, Student's Right to Read, Freedom to Teach, to Learn and to Express Ideas in the Public Schools.

4. Statement of the legal responsibility of the governing board and the delegation of authority to professional personnel.

II. Selection Procedures

1. Description of resources covered by the policy.

2. Outline of the process used in the selection of resources including procedures for selection: consulting reputable selection sources, curriculum guides, preview, and professional judgment.

3. Listing of criteria for the selection of all resources, including gifts.

4. Statement that all resources selected will meet established criteria.

5. Statement that recommendations for selection may be made by anyone but that final decisions for purchase are made by professional media personnel and teachers.

III. Reevaluation Procedures

1. Statement that the procedure applies to all requests for reevaluation including those originating from school personnel and School Board members.

2. Person to whom the request for reevaluation is directed.

3. Statement of procedure for information meeting with the teacher or media person involved to explain the selection and reevaluation procedures used in the district, the reevaluation form, and how the challenged resource is used.

4. Reevaluation committee--the members, how and when chosen or elected, length of term. Teachers and media personnel must be included on the committee, others may be included.

5. Outline of the process used by the reevaluation committee and a timeline.

6. Statement indicating open hearings including provision for testimony from appropriate individuals and open records.

7. Statement about the status of the resource during the reevaluation process.

8. Criteria for the reevaluation of resources.

9. Statement that the decision about the disposition of the resource be based on the established criteria.

10. Statement indicating to whom the decision of the reevaluation committee is communicated.

11. Statement of whether the decision relates to one grade level, one school or the entire district.

12. Notice of right to appeal to the School Board.

Minnesota Coalition Against Censorship
1021 West Broadway, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411

Adopted 5/22/1980 Revised 2/14/1985, 2/12/1987

Books and Materials Challenge

TERMINOLOGY

EXPRESSION OF CONCERN	An inquiry that has judgmental overtones.
ORAL COMPLAINT	An oral challenge to the presence and/or appropriateness of the material in question.
WRITTEN COMPLAINT	A formal, written complaint filed with the institution (library, school, etc.) challenging the presence and/or appropriateness of specific material.
PUBLIC ATTACK	A publicly disseminated statement challenging the value of the material, presented to the media and/or others outside the institutional organization in order to gain public support for further action.
CENSORSHIP	A change in the access status of material, made by a governing authority. Such changes include: restriction, removal, or age/grade level changes.

The above terminology was adopted by the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the American Library Association during its annual conference meeting on June 27, 1987.

Part I. Selection Policy

Introduction

The policy statement adopted by the school board represents the school district's beliefs and values. The statement, usually brief, refers to constitutional protections, the responsibility of the district to provide a wide range of educational resources for teaching and learning, the value of information and ideas in a pluralistic society, and the responsibility of schools to protect access to information. Frequently, reference is made to statements from the school district's mission and goals. These references are valuable because they illustrate the role that educational resources have in helping the school achieve its educational goals.

Part I Statement of: Philosophy of Educational Resource Selection

EXAMPLES

1) Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

> The policy of the Board of School Trustees of School District #39 (Vancouver) is to provide a wide range of learning resources at varying levels of difficulty, with diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view to meet the needs of students and teachers.

2) IFC unpublished draft*

> The policy of the District is to provide information and resources in classrooms and school library media centers in accordance with constitutional protections. School District 000 supports the systematic review of resources through established procedures.

*Note: the examples identified as IFC unpublished draft are from a draft unpublished sample policy developed by the members of an American Association of School Librarians Intellectual Freedom Committee but not adopted by AASL This note refers to all examples attributed to "IFC unpublished draft. "IFC unpublished draft" is used here for identification purposes only.

3) Sylvania City Schools, Sylvania, Ohio

> The educational philosophy of the school district calls for "an educational environment with learning opportunities that foster intellectual, physical, social and emotional development at a pace and level commensurate with each students' unique blend of aptitudes, achievements, needs, learning styles and interests."
>
> To fulfill this broad goal, courses of study prescribe the curriculum to be taught. Instructional materials are selected and adopted to support the curriculum. The purpose of this policy is to set the understanding upon which these educational resources are to be selected.

4) St. Cloud, Minnesota

> Public education in a democracy is committed to facilitate the educational growth and equal educational opportunity of all students. The freedom to learn, therefore, and the corresponding

freedom to teach are basic to a democratic society. In order to meet these goals, School District 742 is committed to selecting learning resources which will aid student development in three basic areas: (a) critical thinking; (b) objective evaluation; (c) aesthetic appreciation.

Part I. Policy. Objectives.

Statement of: Objectives of Resource Selection

Introduction

The objectives of selection, while necessarily brief, represent the translation of the school district's educational philosophy into the resources selected for use by students and teachers. Objectives clarify that resources are judged on the educational suitability of the resources for their intended uses, not on the personal values and beliefs of the persons doing the selecting, nor the perceived values of the majority of the citizens in the community. More than any other section of the policy, objectives help to explain the purpose of using a variety of educational resources in the school. Objectives illustrate the belief that students need to have access to a wide range of information and ideas beyond those presented in textbooks.

Part I. Policy. Objectives.

Statement of: Objectives of Resource Selection

EXAMPLES

1) IFC unpublished draft, see note on p. 8

1. The professional staff select and use resources to implement the educational program of the school district.
2. Resources represent the breadth of the curriculum, respecting diverse points of view, while responding to the needs, interests, and abilities of a wide range of individual students.

2) Owatonna, Minnesota

A. It is the responsibility of school personnel who select resources to provide resources that will support and enrich the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, learning styles and maturity levels of students served.

B. It is the responsibility of school personnel who select resources to provide resources that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, critical analysis of differing sides of issues, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and recognition of various societal values.

3) Florida Department of Education

The inclusion of any item in a collection does not necessarily mean that the school or the [school library media] center advocates or endorses the contents of that item.

It is the responsibility of the school library media center:

6. To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of educational resources of high quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the library media center.

4) Yorktown Heights Central School District, New York

Educational resources in the school library media center provide:

1. Reading and audiovisual material to supplement and develop the subjects taught in the schools.
2. A wide range of the best material available on appropriate levels of difficulty, with a diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view.
3. For the needs of individual students, by offering wide variety of materials that foster intellectual development, acquisition of knowledge, and constructive use of leisure time.

5) Port Neches Independent School District, Texas

1. Help the reader understand himself* and the society in which he lives. . .
4. Present all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times so that every student may have the opportunity to develop an inquiring mind practiced in observing, reasoning, and drawing logical conclusions.

(*Comment: the language in this policy reflects the time it was adopted before school districts became sensitive to using inclusive language.)

6) Octorara Area School District, Atglen, Pennsylvania

1. To provide a variety of materials to supplement the main units of work taught in all areas of the curriculum.
2. To provide a basic reference collection for the development of research skills.
3. To introduce students to many types of non-book materials and to develop skills in their use so that the students may widen their horizons of learning experiences by sight and sound as well as by the printed word.
5. To provide a variety of titles at various interest and reading levels to stimulate students to explore more fully he world of books.

(Comment: Following the pattern of the objectives listed in example 6, selection policy writing committees could add objectives that reflect current educational concerns such as:

To provide educational resources that support various styles of teaching: e.g. resource-based teaching.
To provide educational resources that allow students to evaluate, synthesize, and use information effectively.
To provide educational resources for students with particular physical disabilities and other special educational needs.)

7) St. Cloud, Minnesota

B. Materials should be selected which represent a diversity of views and expression in order to promote critical thinking and objective evaluation under professional guidance. Selection of a work does not constitute agreement with the content.
C. Materials should, as far as possible, accurately reflect contributions and achievements of women and men, as well as individuals and groups of various racial, social, ethnic, and religious backgrounds.
D. Materials selected should be of the highest quality appropriate to the level of students while considering curriculum objectives and availability of materials.
E. Materials selected should be considered by the impact of each work as a whole--not in part. Few works are totally perfect; works containing a single flaw, flawed passage, or a number of flawed passages are not necessarily works of poor quality.

Part I. Policy. Freedom to Read, View and Listen

Statements about intellectual freedom and the teachers' and students' constitutional rights to read, view and listen citing documents such as Library Bill of Rights (American Library Association), Statement on Intellectual Freedom (Association for Educational Communications and Technology), Student's Right to Read (National Council of Teachers of English), Freedom to Teach, to Learn and to Express Ideas in the Public Schools (Minnesota State Department of Education.)

These statements are appended to this workbook and are not necessarily endorsed by the MCAC.

Introduction

Reference to documents from professional associations is frequently made in selection policies. While useful in illustrating the values and beliefs of professional associations, policy statements from other sources are not essential in a school district policy. However, including professional association documents provides, for members of those associations, a sense of ownership and may provide language that helps to educate readers of the policy about the importance of access to information in schools.

Some school boards are understandably reluctant to endorse documents that they did not develop. Official documents could be attached to school district policies with a qualifier stating that the school board supports the concepts or ideas included in the documents without actually endorsing individual statements.

Part I. Policy. Freedom to Read, View, and Listen

Statements about intellectual freedom and teachers' and students' constitutional rights to read, view and listen citing documents

EXAMPLE

1) Owatonna Public Schools, Minnesota

A. The Board of Education of District 761, Owatonna, Minnesota, supports the principles of intellectual freedom inherent in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States as expressed in official statements of professional associations. Copies of the following documents are appended and form a part of this policy: Library Bill of Rights (American Library Association), The Freedom to Read (American Library Association), The Right to Read (National Council of Teachers of English), Statement on Intellectual Freedom (Association for Educational Communications and Technology), and Freedom to View (American Film and Video Association).

(Comment: Only one example was provided here because others were very similar.)

Notes

Part I. Policy. Legal Responsibility

Statement of: the legal responsibility of the governing board and the delegation of authority to professional personnel

Introduction

Selection policies state that school boards are legally responsible for the operation of the school district, including the determination of resources used in the district. The school board, the policy making body, delegates the authority to select resources to teachers and media specialists employed by the district. Delegation of this responsibility to school library media specialists and teachers parallels the delegation to teachers of the responsibility for the teaching and learning processes used in the classroom. In some school districts, it might be valuable to indicate that the role of the principal is supervising the process, not actually performing the selection.

Part I. Policy. Legal Responsibility.

Statement of: the legal responsibility of the governing board and the delegation of authority to professional personnel

EXAMPLES

1) Dearborn Public Schools, Michigan

> The responsibility for all instructional materials is legally vested in the Dearborn Board of Education which delegates to the professionals the responsibility to develop final recommendations for acquisitions. Moreover, the actual selection is left to the professionals whose responsibility it is to know the curriculum, the students, and the philosophy of the school system.

2) Iowa Department of Public Instruction

> B. The responsibility for the selection of instructional materials is delegated to the professionally trained and certificated staff employed by the school system.
>
> D. Responsibility for coordinating the selection of text materials for distribution to classes will rest with the appropriate department chairperson or with the text evaluation committee.

3) School District of Lancaster, Pennsylvania

> The purchase of all media materials is legally vested in the school board. The board delegates to the library media staff the responsibility to develop final recommendations for purchase. The actual selection of materials is the responsibility of professionally trained library media personnel who know the courses of study, the methods of teaching and the individual differences of students.
>
> The library media staff will choose materials that are keyed to the curricular and personal interests and needs of the students and faculty. Library media personnel will be aided by initial purchase suggestions from administrators, supervisors, faculty, students and parents (community). The widest participation at this level

is encouraged. The individual library media person is responsible for the final evaluation and selection of materials.

4) (Educational Policy Services/National School Boards Association/ Ohio)

As the governing body of the school district, the Board is legally responsible for the selection of instructional materials. Since the Board is a policymaking body, it delegates to professional personnel of the district the authority for the selection of instructional and library materials in accordance with the policy below.

Part II. Selection Procedures

Introduction

This section describes the procedures for selecting educational resources used in the district. The important elements to be included in the policy are: 1) who makes recommendations for selection, 2) who makes final decisions for purchase, and 3) what procedures are followed. The focus in the section should be on the professional judgment of the media specialists and teachers.

The procedures section in a selection policy does not include the procedures used for the acquisition of educational resources. These procedures would be included in a collection development or acquisitions procedures manual. Current professional practice suggests that school districts develop selection policies and reevaluation procedures and individual schools develop collection development procedures manuals.

Committees writing policies will made a decision about whether to develop a list of specific educational resources or to use inclusive language that indicates that all educational resources available in the school are covered by the policy. Examples of both types of language are provided here.

Part II. Selection Procedures

Description of resources covered by the policy

EXAMPLES

1) Robbinsdale Area Schools, Minnesota

Definition of Instructional Materials

Instructional materials are all print and non-print materials purchased by the district and used in the education of the student. They include texts, books, periodicals, pamphlets, filmstrips, films, records, tapes, graphic materials, globes, maps, microforms, transparencies, and other print and non-print materials. These materials are housed in a district media center, a building media center, a classroom, or a department, and are used by students and teachers of the district.

2) Iowa Department of Public Instruction

For the purpose of this rule the term "instructional materials' includes printed and audiovisual materials (not equipment), whether considered text materials or media center materials (media).

For the purpose of this rule, the term "media" includes all materials considered part of the library collection, plus all instructional materials in resource centers and classrooms (if any) which are not text materials.

For the purpose of this rule the term "text materials' includes textbooks and other print and nonprint material provided in multiple copies for use of a total class or a major segment of such a class.

3) St. Cloud, Minnesota

Learning resources are defined as all print and non-print materials used in the education of a student. This includes: (a) all materials used in the classroom and in extra-curricular activities; (b) media collections -- books, periodicals, pamphlets,

filmstrips, films, records, tapes, graphic materials, globes, maps, microforms, transparencies, and other print and non-print material.

4) Owatonna, Minnesota

C. For the purpose of this statement of policy, the term "resources" will refer to any person(s) or any materials(s) (whether acquired or locally produced) with instructional content or function that is available or unavailable for formal or informal teaching/learning purposes. The term "unavailable" refers to a resource that has been denied inclusion. Resources include but are not limited to textbooks, other books, supplementary reading and informational materials, charts, community resource people, agencies and organizations, dioramas, filmstrips, kits, machine readable data files, maps, microforms, models, motion pictures, periodicals, pictures, realia, slides, sound recordings, transparencies, video recordings, computer software, dramatic presentations, concerts, athletic events, and written and performed music.

5) Maple Grove, Minnesota

a. In general, instructional material is defined as those items which are read, listened to, manipulated, observed or experienced by students as part of the instructional process. They may be consumable or non-consumable and may vary greatly in the kind of student response they stimulate. Instructional materials include by are not limited to: textbooks, teachers' manuals, kits, games, computer software, apparatus, media collection of library books, films, filmstrips, records, tapes, slides, microfilms and other print and non-print materials.

Part II. Selection Procedures

Outline of the process used in the selection of resources including procedures for selection: consulting reputable selection sources, curriculum guides, preview, and professional judgment

Introduction

This section of the policy outlines the process used to select the educational resources used in the district. Details include the procedures used by the teachers and media specialists to identify titles to be purchased. Separate sections outline procedures for the selection of media resources and classroom resources.

Some school district policies include a list of selection sources, and indicate that educational resources must be reviewed positively in one or more selection sources before being considered for purchase. This requirement limits the teachers and media specialists and should not be included in policies. While selection aids are useful in helping teachers and media specialists identify titles to be considered for purchase, using reviews as a criteria for selection focuses on the review, rather than the professional judgment of the teachers and media specialists. There are several reasons why a review should not be considered a criteria for selection. Published reviews are necessarily general and are written for both school and public librarians. Resources of local or regional interest are not usually reviewed in national selection aids. Reviews do not address educational needs in specific school districts. Whether selection results from a review or actual examination of the resource, professional judgment should be the focus, not lists of acceptable selection aids.

Part II. Selection Procedures

Outline of the process used in the selection of resources including procedures for selection: consulting reputable selection sources, curriculum guides, preview, and professional judgment

EXAMPLES School Library Media Resources

1) IFC unpublished draft, see note on p. 8
   A. School library media specialists and teachers shall:
      1. evaluate existing resources.
      2. assess curriculum needs.
      3. consider networking arrangements.
      4. consult reputable, professionally prepared aids for selection.
      5. preview or examine the actual item whenever possible.
      6. judge items as a whole.
      7. select resources for their strengths.
      8. consider standards of technical quality and physical condition appropriate to the format and intended use.
      9. consider scope, arrangement and organization, special features, and overall value to the collection.

2) Owatonna, Minnesota

   A. In selecting resources, professional personnel shall evaluate the available resources and curriculum needs and shall consult reputable, professionally prepared aids for selection and other appropriate sources. The actual item shall be examined when deemed appropriate.

   B. Administrators, teachers, students, and other school district personnel and community persons may make recommendations for purchase.

   C. Gift resources shall be judged by the criteria outlined in IV, page 2, and shall be accepted or rejected by those criteria.

D. Selection is an ongoing process which includes the removal of resources which are no longer appropriate and replacement of resources which are lost or damaged.

EXAMPLES Textbook and Classroom Resources

1) Iowa Department of Public Instruction

B. Text material

1. Text materials committees shall be appointed at the time that text adoption areas are determined. Appropriate subject area, instructional level, and media personnel shall be included on each committee.
2. Criteria for text materials consistent with the general criteria for materials selection noted in Section II shall be developed by the text materials evaluation committee.
3. The committee shall present its recommendation(s) to the superintendent or other designated administrator.
4. The superintendent or the superintendent's designee and the text materials committee shall present the recommendation(s) to the board.

2) Educational Policy Services/National School Boards Association - Colorado

Textbook selection

The Board will officially adopt textbook programs for use in the district schools upon recommendation of the superintendent.

Responsibility for the review and selection of textbooks to be recommended will rest with the textbook and/or curriculum committees as appointed by the superintendent or a designee. Membership on such committees will include representation for teachers who will use the texts, administrators, and other staff members as found desirable. Students and parents may be asked to serve.

Principles that apply generally to the selection of instructional materials and library materials will apply to textbooks.

Additionally, basic textbooks and textbook programs will be chosen:

1. To advance the educational objectives of the school system and particular objectives of the course or program

2. To contribute toward continuity, integration, and articulation of the curriculum.

3. To establish a general framework for the particular course or program.

Because the instructional purposes of textbooks, as stated above, are of such importance, particular care will be taken in their selection as to content. Although many points must be examined, the Board directs the staff to be particularly mindful of the following considerations:

1. The needs of all learners, including slow learners and the exceptionally able, must be provided for.
2. Insofar as possible, multiethnic materials which depict a pluralistic society should be selected.
3. Attention should be given to sex roles depicted in the materials.
4. The textbook, or textbook program, should lead the student beyond the textbook into a wide variety of other materials and educational experiences.
5. If the textbook deals with problems and issues of our times, it should present and encourage examination of all* points of view.

(*Comment: Because it is impossible to assure that <u>all</u> points of view have been included and the school district might be open to criticism if a point of view is identified as missing, policy writing committees should use the phrase "a variety of points of view.")

EXAMPLES Other Resources

1) Robbinsdale, Minnesota

Responsibilities for instructional materials used in the classroom but not purchased by the district.

1. The teacher has the right to use materials that he believes will increase his effectiveness in meeting the objectives of the course he is teaching.

2. The teacher recognizes his responsibility to use good judgment in the selection of materials. The teacher who is in doubt concerning the advisability of using certain materials in the classroom should consult with his principal.

(Comment: This sample is the only example of language that addresses the use of resources not otherwise covered by the policy. Note also that this policy could be revised.)

For example:
1. Teachers have the right to use educational resources that they believe will increase their effectiveness . . .
2. Teachers recognize their responsibility to use professional judgment in the selection of educational resources. . .)

Part II. Selection Procedures. Criteria.

Listing of criteria for the selection of all educational resources, including gifts

EXAMPLES

1) IFC unpublished draft, see note on p. 8

Educational suitability is the major criterion for the selection of resources. Professional staff use the following criteria.

Resources shall:

1. be consistent with the educational goals of the district and the objectives of individual schools and specific courses.
2. be appropriate for the age, social development, and maturity of the users.
3. meet the interests, abilities, learning styles, and information needs of the users.
5. represent the diversity of religious, ethnic, political and cultural values held in a pluralistic society.
6. illustrate the contributions made by various groups to our national heritage and the world.
7. illustrate historical and contemporary forces in society . . .
8. provide various points of view, including those considered by some to be controversial.
9. represent various theories about the physical environment and the universe.

2) Owatonna, Minnesota

IV. Criteria for Selection (to be used as they apply)

A. Resources shall support and be consistent with the general educational goals of District 761 and the goals and objectives of individual schools and specific courses.

B. Resources shall be chosen to support and enrich the individual school curriculum and to meet the personal needs of the students.

C. Resources shall be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles and social development of students for whom the materials are selected.

D. Resources shall provide a background of information which will motivate students to examine their own attitudes and behavior, to comprehend their duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges as participating citizens in our society, and to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.

E. Resources shall provide information on differing sides of issues so that users may develop the practice of critical analysis.

F. Resources shall be selected for the atypical student as well as the average student.

G. Resources shall be selected for their strengths rather than rejected for their weaknesses, and shall be judged as a whole.

3) Findlay City Schools, Ohio

The following criteria for selection of materials will be used as they apply:

a. Materials shall support and be consistent with the general educational goals of the district and the objectives of specific courses.
b. Materials shall meet high standards of quality in factual content and presentation.
c. Materials shall be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, and social development of the students for whom the materials are selected.
d. Materials shall have aesthetic, literary, or social value.

4) Iowa Department of Public Instruction

7. Materials shall be selected for their strengths rather than rejected for their weaknesses.
8. Biased or slanted materials may be provided to meet specific curriculum objectives.
9. Physical format and appearance of materials shall be suitable for their intended use.

5) North Carolina

Criteria for selecting media

Individual learning styles, the curriculum, and the existing collection are given consideration in determining the needs for media in individual schools.

Media considered for purchase are judged on the basis of the following criteria:

Purpose--Overall purpose and its direct relationship to instructional objectives/curriculum

Reliability -- Accurate, authentic

Treatment - Clear, skillful, convincing, well organized, unbiased

Technical production -- Audio and/or visual

Construction -- Durable, manageable, attractive

Special features -- Illustrations, photographs, maps, charts, graphs, guides, etc.

Possible uses -- Individual ,small group, large group, introduction, in-depth study.

6) Richmond County School System, Augusta, Georgia

1. Needs of individual school
   a. Based on knowledge of instructional program
   b. Based on requests from administration and teachers.

2. Needs of individual students
   a. Based on knowledge of children, youth, and adults.
   b. Based on requests of parents and students.
3. Provision of wide range of materials on all levels of difficulty with a diversity of appeal and presentation of different points of view.

7) Middleborough Public Schools, Middleborough, Massachusetts
Materials for the school library will be selected in accordance with the following:

1. Needs of the school based on the curriculum and requests from administrators and teachers.
2. Needs of the students based on a knowledge of youth and requests of students and parents.

8) Lauderdale County Public Schools, Florence, Alabama

Students learn in many different ways: some by seeing, some by reading, some by hearing, and some by handling. The collection should be carefully chosen so as to complement the needs of each student and to offer each student an opportunity to extend boundaries of knowledge and to explore and satisfy curiosity beyond classroom assignments.

In order to make wise selections, library personnel must have a thorough knowledge of all kinds of materials and should understand the growth and development patterns of children and youth as well as an understanding of their needs and interests.

Needs of the individual school and community, based on knowledge of the curriculum, methods and philosophies of its teachers, and of the existing collection are given first consideration.

9) Robbinsdale Area Schools, Minnesota

I. General Criteria for Selection

A. Authenticity
The materials should be produced or written by a recognized authority in his field, and they should be reliable in terms of information presented.

B. Appropriateness
The materials, including current fiction, should be appropriate to the needs of the students, the curriculum, and the total educational program of the school.
C. Quality
The materials should be well organized in the presentation of information and should achieve their stated purpose. They should have a superior print or non-print format.
D. Cost
The cost of the material should be justified considering the relative costs of satisfactory substitutes and the money available for new materials.

10) Florida Department of Education

4. Special consideration is given to treatment of the following elements: religion, ideologies, sex education, sex, profanity, and science.

a.Religion - Factual unbiased material which represents all major religions is included in the collection.

(Comment: By their nature, resources about ideologies, religion, and sex will be considered by some persons to be biased. The identification of areas for special consideration creates a risk that considerations other than educational suitability, appropriateness, and other adopted criteria will be used. We do not recommend special considerations, rather adopted criteria should be applied equally to all resources.)

Part II. Selection Procedures.

Statement that: all resources selected will meet established criteria whether the resources are purchased or donated

EXAMPLES

1) IFC unpublished draft, see note on p. 8

   C. Donated resources shall meet the criteria outlined in this policy.

2) Mona Shores Public Schools, Michigan

   Gifts will be acceptable when they meet the same standards as original purchases; require no special conditions; and may be disposed of when warranted.

3) Minnesota Coalition Against Censorship

   a. All educational resources selected must meet school board adopted selection criteria as defined in this policy.

   b. Gifts may be accepted following the same school district selection criteria used in the selection of other educational resources.

   c. Selection of television news services, other broadcast services, and other educational resources must be made without regard to premiums or other incentives, and follow school district adopted policies for the selection of any other resources.

Notes

Part II. Selection Procedures. Process.

Statement that: recommendations for selection may be made by anyone but that final decisions for purchase are made by media specialists and other teachers

Introduction

This is covered in most policies in the section about legal responsibility and delegation of authority for selection. However, language could be repeated here.

Part II. Selection Procedures.

Statement that: recommendations for selection may be made by anyone but that final decisions for purchase are made by media specialists and other teachers

EXAMPLES

1) IFC unpublished draft, see note on p. 8

> B. Recommendations for purchase may be made by administrators, teachers, students, district personnel, and community persons. Decisions to purchase shall be made by media specialists and classroom teachers.

2) Moorhead, Minnesota

> B. While selection of materials involves many people, including library/media specialists, teachers, students, supervisors, administrators, and community persons, the responsibility for coordinating and recommending the selection and purchase of instructional resources rests with the licensed professional personnel.

3) Anoka, Minnesota

> The responsibility for the selection of media center materials is delegated to the building media generalist. Teachers, consultants, principals, and students are called upon for their ideas regarding specific materials needed in a field of specialization. The responsibility for the selection of curriculum materials is delegated to the appropriate department teaching staff and district consultants.

4) Carlton, Minnesota

> 1. The print and nonprint materials for the media center should be selected in conjunction with faculty and students. However, because of the media person's position, expertise in selection, and knowledge of the media collection, he or she has the primary responsibility for materials selection as authorized by the administration.

5) Frazee-Vergas Public Schools, Minnesota

While selection of materials involves many people, including library/media specialists, teachers, students, and administrators, the responsibility for coordinating and recommending the purchase of media materials rests with the library-media personnel.

6) Cass Lake, Minnesota

The responsibility for the selection and coordination of materials for the school library media center shall rest with the professionally trained personnel. Administration, faculty, students, and parents should be involved in the selection process. However, because of the knowledge of the overall collection, budget, and other considerations, final decisions on purchases shall rest with the professional personnel in accordance with the policy.

Part III. Reevaluation Procedures.

Introduction

All challenges, whether from someone within the school or from someone outside the school, must be treated the same. A major problem with review procedures in many school districts is that requests from the public are handled formally, following procedures, but arbitrary judgments are made when objections to resources come from school personnel. All objections must be treated in the same manner -- by following school board adopted procedures.

This section of the policy serves three important functions:

1) recognizes that all persons have a right to petition the government for a redress of grievances,

2) outlines procedures that provide for a timely and fair review of challenged resources,

3) clarifies that procedures apply to all expressions of concern and challenges, including requests for reevaluation from teachers, administrators, school board members, and other school personnel.

The procedures should provide for a timely and fair review of resources and be consistent with constitutional protections. Enough detail should be provided here so that all persons having concerns about resources know exactly what will happen when an expression of concern, challenge, or request for removal of a resources is received by the school.

Procedures include:

1) naming by position members of the committee,
2) specifying who elects/appoints the committee,

3) who is responsible for notifying committee members of a hearing,
4) who provides resources for review by committee members, and
5) how the committee operates.

Without sufficient detail, an equitable review process is not likely to occur.

Special attention must be given to expressions of concern raised by school administrators and school board members. When educational resources are questioned by superiors, far graver consequences are anticipated than when concerns are raised by parents and other members of the community or school. Because of the position administrators and school board members hold over teachers, their questions about resources could intimidate teachers and media specialists and may have a chilling effect on the teacher's and media specialist's selection and use of resources. Further, requests to remove educational resources without following the adopted procedures might imply a threat of insubordination if the request is not followed. The procedures should make clear that all requests for review, including requests from administrators and school board members, are handled by the Review Committee.

The major consideration here is that educational reasons, not personal, political, social, or religious views, determine the suitability of resources used in the school.

Finally, someone should be identified as responsible for monitoring that the policy and procedures will be followed. This person needs to be tenacious about adhering to the policy. School districts get into difficulty when decisions that deviate from established policy are made.

Remember in writing this section, the admonition of the U.S. Supreme Court in Pico: "This case might well have been considered differently if there was evidence that the School Board had followed facially unbiased procedures . . ."

Part III. Reevaluation Procedures. Policy Statements

EXAMPLES

1) St. Cloud, Minnesota

The right of any individual to free access to materials is basic to a democratic society and to the educational growth of its members. This individual who has access to all material is freed from the bonds of discovering all things, facts, and truths through the narrow confines of his/her own direct experience.

In spite of this, occasional objections to instructional materials will be made. The District 742 School Board supports the principles of intellectual freedom inherent in the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and expressed in the "Library Bill of Rights" of the American Library Association, "The Right to Read" published by the National Council of Teachers of English, and "The Freedom to View" written by the American Film and Video Association. In the event that materials are questioned, the principles of intellectual freedom, the right to access of materials, and the integrity of the certified staff must be upheld while reevaluating the material in question.

(Comment: In some policies this language is included in the selection policy section.)

2) Norman Public Schools, Oklahoma

Guidelines for Reconsideration of Materials

It is recommended that a student or his/her parent should have the right to reject the use of library resource center materials which seem incompatible with his/her values and beliefs. It is further recommended that classroom assignments involving library resource center materials provide for alternate choices. This procedure is consistent with the National Council of Teachers of English statement on STUDENTS' RIGHT TO READ, which is endorsed in its entirety. However, no parent has the right to determine the reading matter for students other than his/her own children.

3) School District of Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Challenged materials

The review of materials questioned by the public will be treated objectively as an important routine action. Every effort will be made to consider the objections, keeping in mind the best interests of the students, the school, the curriculum, and the community.

(Comment: Note that this example refers to materials questioned by the public. MCAC recommends that review procedures apply to all requests for reevaluation of resources, including those coming from teachers, administrators, and other school personnel. The language in the example could be expanded to refer to all requests for reevaluation.)

4) Gwinnett County, Georgia

Request for Appeal/Media

A. Objections may be raised to instructional materials used in the system's educational program despite the fact that the individuals selecting such material were duly qualified to make the selection, followed proper procedure and observed the criteria for selecting such material.

B. To have standing to either initiate a complaint or intervene in the appeal process, a person must be a citizen of Gwinnett County.

Part III. Reevaluation Procedures.

Statement that the procedure applies to all requests for reevaluation including those originating from school personnel and school board members

EXAMPLES

1) Owatonna, Minnesota

D. All residents and employees of the school district shall adhere to the Policy and Procedure for Selection and Reevaluation of Resources.

2) Iowa Department of Public Instruction

A. Any resident or employee of the school district may raise objection to instructional materials used in the district's educational program despite the fact that the individuals selecting such material were qualified to make the selection and followed proper procedure and observed the criteria for selecting such material.

3) Maple Grove, Minnesota

5. Right to Challenge Instructional Material

a. The school board acknowledges the right of citizens, students relative to the appropriateness or acceptability of instructional material.
b. In the event that materials are challenged on these grounds, the First Amendment Rights of the Constitution of the United States of America are of primary importance.

Part III. Reevaluation Procedures.

Person to whom the request for reevaluation is directed

EXAMPLES

1) Owatonna, Minnesota

B. Each objector shall be directed to the building principal or the designee.

2) Gwinnett County, Georgia

A. The school official or staff member receiving a complaint regarding instructional materials shall explain the selection process utilized and the appeal procedures for challenged materials. They shall refrain from voicing personal opinion.

1. Written documentation of this contact should be filed with the school principal.
2. The material in question shall remain in use unless removed through the procedure in this section.

B. In the event that the person making an objection to materials is not satisfied with the initial explanation, the person should be referred to the Principal who shall explain the selection and reconsideration process and refrain from expressing personal opinion.

C. Any action taken related to challenged materials must be taken by the appropriate Media Committee and not by an individual.

3) Chosen Valley, Minnesota

Requests for reconsideration shall be directed to the appropriate instructor (textbooks) or librarian (media). The staff member shall immediately advise the school principal of the complaint . . . .

Part III. Reevaluation Procedures. Information Meeting.

Introduction

In some school district policies, this section has been erroneously labeled informal resolution. While resolution might occur if the person expressing the concern chooses not to file a formal request for review, the information meeting is for the purpose of explaining school board procedures about selecting and using educational resources, not a time for school personnel to make sudden, unreviewed, and undocumented decisions about the continued use of resources. For example, there may be a temptation for a principal or teacher to listen to the objections of a parent and agree with him/her and remove the resource on the spot rather than face the review procedure.

Sometimes, becoming aware of the need for a variety of resources to meet the needs of a diverse student population, causes complainants to reconsider their actions and withdraw their complaints. A decision not to file a formal complaint frequently occurs after the explanation of 1) procedures used to select the resource, or 2) reasons that a resource is being used in the district are explained.

Part III. Reevaluation Procedures. Information Meeting.

Statement of procedure for information meeting with the teacher or media person involved to explain the selection and reevaluation procedures used in the district, the reevaluation form, and how the challenged resource is used

EXAMPLES

1) Owatonna, Minnesota

C. Within three (3) regular school days of receiving the objection, the principal or designee shall contact the objector, provide him/her with a copy of these policies and procedures, and arrange a meeting with him/her.

D. The principal and/or other appropriate staff shall explain to the objector the school's selection procedure, the selection criteria and the qualifications of those persons selecting the resources.

E. The principal and/or other appropriate staff shall explain the selection rationale for the resource, its intended educational use, and any additional information regarding its use.

2) Iowa Department of Public Instruction

1. The school official or staff member receiving a complaint regarding instructional materials shall try to resolve the issue . . .

3) Hastings, Minnesota

When a material is questioned, an attempt will be made to resolve it at the building level in a calm, courteous manner. The principal and/or staff member receiving the complaint should meet with the complainant to hear his/her objections and to respond to his/her concerns.

4) Tyler, Russell, Ruthton Public Schools, Minnesota

When a citizen objects to material, the school personnel receiving the complaint should attempt to informally discuss and, if possible, resolve the issue with the complainant. This school personnel shall also inform the citizen of the availability of policies and procedures for reconsideration of materials.

5) Osseo, Minnesota

b. Informal procedures

(2) Initiating the challenge at the building level.

(a) The person initiating the challenge should communicate with the teacher and/or media person, whichever is appropriate.

(b) Each challenge shall be dealt with in a courteous and confidential manner.

(c) An informal resolution is defined as a condition in which both parties agree to accept the material as currently used.

(d) If the challenge is not resolved informally, with either the teacher or media generalist,the person initiating the challenge must contact the building Principal. If the challenge still cannot be resolved informally, then the building principal will invite the person who is initiating the challenge to evaluation" form.

(e) Upon submission of the form, the challenge will be defined as formal and the process for formal challenges will be initiated at the appropriate level.

6) Chosen Valley, Minnesota

The staff member shall immediately advise the school principal of the complaint and then attempt to resolve the issue informally. The school official or staff member should:

1. Explain the school's selection procedures, criteria used for selection, and the qualifications of the persons who made the selection;

2. Explain the place that the material in question occupies in the educational program and its intended educational use (should the official or staff member not have knowledge of this facet, a person who does, such as the department leader or media person, should be involved);

3. Keep a written record of the complaint including name of complainant, title of the material, description of the complaint, and synopsis of the events

Part III. Reevaluation. Committee.

Introduction

The makeup of the reevaluation committee will vary from school district to school district. Professionals must be on the committee. Whether citizens and parents from the community are on the committee will be a matter of local preference. Of most importance is a committee of competent members who will take their responsibilities seriously and consider each concern brought to them in the light of the purposes and goals of the school district.

Some districts include school board members as voting members on the review committee. Because the school board is the avenue of appeal for persons dissatisfied by the committee's decision, inclusion of a school board member as a voting member of the committee is comparable to having an Appeals Court judge sit as a member of a jury, and therefore, should not occur. Of course, school board members may attend hearings and the school board might designate a board member to attend as a matter of information. In fact, in some districts, school board members are routinely included on all district committees.

Reevaluation committees should be standing committees rather than ad hoc committees. Members of standing committees are familiar with school board adopted procedures, know their responsibilities, and are less likely to be selected for their interest in, or stake in the outcome of a particular challenge. Standing committees also indicate that the school district is prepared to act on requests for review as a matter of course, rather than as an unusual incident.

Part III. Reevaluation. Committee.

Reevaluation committee--the members, how and when chosen or elected, length of term. Teachers and media personnel must be included on the committee, others may be included

EXAMPLES

1) Owatonna, Minnesota

A. The Committee for Reevaluation of Resources shall be made up yearly, prior to September 22, of ten (10) members from School District 761.

B. Categories 1 through 10, listed below, shall each be two-year terms. The odd numbered categories shall be elected/selected in the fall of the odd numbered years; the even numbered categories shall be elected/selected in the fall of the even numbered years.

1. One member elected/selected from the Board of Education.

2. One building principal or assistant principal selected by the superintendent.

3. One elementary teacher elected/selected by the Owatonna Education Association.

4. One secondary teacher elected/selected by the Owatonna Education Association.

5. One professional media person elected/selected by the K-12 media staff.

6. One student from Owatonna High School elected/selected by the high school student council.

7. One District 761 resident selected by District 761 residents #8 and #10.

8. One District 761 resident selected by District 761 residents #7 and #9.

9. One District 761 resident selected by District 761 residents #8 and #10.

10. One District 761 resident selected by District 761 residents #7 and #9.

C. When a vacancy occurs on the committee, the professional media person (p. 6, III, D) shall meet with the individual(s) responsible for the category in which the vacancy has occurred and obtain a replacement to complete the term.

D. By May 5 of every year, the superintendent shall appoint a professional media person to:

1. Notify in writing prior to May 15 those groups who must elect/select a representative for the following year.

2. Send a reminder in writing between August 25 and September 5 to those groups who have not responded to the first notice.

3. Arrange and convene an organizational/inservice meeting no later than September 22 for the ten (10) member Committee for Reevaluation of Resources.

E. At their organizational/inservice meeting, the ten members shall elect a chair and a recording secretary.

F. Should any reevaluation committee member be involved with a questioned resource, a temporary replacement from his/her category shall be appointed by the chair of the Committee for Reevaluation of Resources. Once a decision on the questioned resource has been made by the reevaluation committee, the member shall return as a participating member of the committee.

2) Tyler, Russell, Ruthton Public Schools

III. Committee for Reevaluation

A. The Committee for Reevaluation shall be made up yearly, prior to September 2, of six members of the School District.

B. Categories 1 through 4, listed below, shall each be a two-year term. The odd numbered categories shall be elected/selected in the Fall of the odd numbered years; the even numbered categories shall be elected/selected in the Fall of the even numbered year. Residents selected for category 5 shall serve a one-year term.

1. One member from the Board of Education
2. The building principal
3. One faculty member
4. One media person
5. Two community members

C. Should any reevaluation committee member be involved with a questioned resource, a temporary replacement from his/her category shall be appointed by the members of the Committee for Reevaluation of Resources. Once a decision on the questioned resource has been made by the reevaluation committee, the member shall return as a participating member of the committee.

Part III. Reevaluation.

Outline of the process used by the reevaluation committee and a time line

EXAMPLES

1) Owatonna, Minnesota

C. The chair of the Committee for Reevaluation of Resources shall:

1. Notify committee members of the objection and set a meeting date.

2. Distribute a copy of the completed Request for Reevaluation of a Resource form to each committee member.

3. Distribute the appropriate Checklist for Reevaluation Committee to each committee member.

4. Obtain and arrange for reading/viewing/listening to the questioned resource by the committee.

5. Obtain reviews of the questioned resource and send them to each committee member at least three (3) regular school days prior to the reevaluation committee meeting. objection, hold a reevaluation committee meeting to discuss the questioned resource, hear testimony and reach a decision. If more time is necessary, the committee members and all others involved shall be notified in writing by the chair.

7. Invite the objector, professional media person or teacher and administrator involved to the committee meeting.

8. Invite appropriate persons to provide testimony during the meeting.

D. The Committee for Reevaluation of a Resource shall:

1. Examine the questioned resource in its entirety.

2. Determine professional acceptance of the resource by reading critical reviews.

3. Weigh values and faults and form opinions on the resource as a whole rather than on passages or sections taken out of context.

4. Discuss the resource in the context of the educational program.

5. Hear testimony.

6. Make a decision by public vote.

7. Prepare a written report using the Report of the Reevaluation Committee form.

E. The recording secretary shall:

1. Record attendance.

2. Take notes and complete the Report of the Reevaluation Committee form.

3. Obtain signatures from committee members on the Report of the Reevaluation Committee form.

4. Be responsible for filing all required reports within five (5) regular school days.

5. Send copies of the completed Report of the Reevaluation Committee form to the objector, the building principal,the superintendent, and the professional media person or teacher involved.

V. Resolution

A. The written report, signed by all members of the committee who attended the meeting, accompanied by all materials used during the proceedings and a minority report, if one is made, shall be filed with the superintendent. This shall be the official record of the case.

B. In the case of a tie vote, the objection shall be denied.

C. The decision shall be binding for the individual school or as specified in the report by the reevaluation committee.

D. The decision shall be communicated to all appropriate employees.

2) Florida Department of Education, Tallahassee, Florida

f. The Committee takes the following steps after receiving the challenged materials:

(1) Reads the entire book, views, or listens to the materials in its entirety.
(2) Checks general acceptance of the material by reading reviews and consulting recommended lists.
(3) Determines the extent to which the material supports the curriculum.
(4) Completes the appropriate "Checklist for "Advisory Committee's Reconsideration of Material," judging the material for its strength and value as a whole and not in part.

Notes

Part III. Reevaluation. Open Hearings.

Statement indicating open hearings including provision for testimony from appropriate individuals and open records

Introduction

Meetings of reevaluation committees follow state public meeting laws. Meetings must be publicly announced and must be open. Persons having interest in the proceedings must be allowed to attend. Participation in the proceedings will be allowed according to operating procedures adopted by the reevaluation committee.

Part III. Reevaluation. Open Hearings.

Statement indicating open hearings including provision for testimony from appropriate individuals and open records

EXAMPLES

1) Stevens Point, Wisconsin

> The reconsideration hearings will be publicly announced and are open to the public. Meetings will be conducted according to procedures adopted by the Committee at its first meeting each year. Copies of these procedures will be available upon request.

2) Iowa Department of Public Instruction

> At the second or subsequent meeting, as desired, the committee shall made its decision, in open session.

3) Anoka, Minnesota

> b. The review committee shall:
> (1) elect a chairperson;
> (2) adopt appropriate guidelines for hearings;
> (3) hold public hearings through which evidence and testimony may be presented related to the material in question;
> (4) review and analyze appropriate information and submit to the superintendent his recommendation relative to the disposition of the questioned material.

4) Moorhead, Minnesota

> D. the Committee for Reevaluation of a Resource shall:
>
> 5. Hear testimony
> 6. Make a decision by public vote.

5) Osseo, Minnesota

(7) The building-level re-evaluation committee:
(c) Will make a decision within four weeks in an open meeting (a minimum of three members, including the chairperson, must be present for a final decision).

6) Hutchinson, Minnesota

A reconsideration group will meet in open session and distribute copies of the completed request, distribute copies of challenged materials as available; give the complainant or group spokesperson an opportunity to talk about the request; and provide reputable professional views of the materials, when available. At a second or subsequent meeting, the committee will make its recommendation in open session.

Part III. Reevaluation Procedures. Status of Resource.

Statement about the status of the educational resource during the reevaluation process

EXAMPLES

1) Owatonna, Minnesota

> J. Use of the questioned resource shall not be restricted during the reevaluation process.

2) Iowa Department of Public Instruction

> The materials shall remain in use unless removed through the procedure in Section IV.B.6.e. of this rule. . . .
>
> Section IV.B.6.e. Special meetings may be called by the Superintendent to consider temporary removal of materials in unusual circumstances. Temporary removal shall require a three-fourths vote of the committee.

3) North Carolina

> 5. Retain challenged materials in the collection until the complaint has been resolved. To remove an item before its review is complete, might jeopardize others who are using the item successfully.

Part III. Revaluation Procedures. Criteria.

Criteria for the reevaluation of resources
Statement that the decision about the disposition of the educational resource be based on the established criteria

Introduction

Judgments made by reevaluation committees must be based on educational suitability, not the personal, political, social, religious values and beliefs of committee members. Committee members hear testimony from persons qualified to speak about the use of the resource, as well as the specific objections raised by the person bringing the concern and make their judgments based on use of the resource, appropriateness of the resource for its specific audience, and its intended educational purpose. Committee members use established criteria when considering the use or suitability of the educational resource.

Part III. Reevaluation Procedures. Criteria.

Criteria for the reevaluation of resources
Statement that the decision about the disposition of the educational resource be based on the established criteria

EXAMPLES

1) St. Cloud, Minnesota

2. Procedure:

a. The District Review Committee will request a written rationale from the staff person concerned (Certified Staff Rationale for Material Use, Form 6181.4) as well as the Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials from the complainant. Additional statements by the complainant may be added to this request form.
b. The Review Committee will read, view, or listen to the challenged material in its entirety.
c. The Review Committee will check general acceptance of this material if possible by reading reviews by qualified sources.
d. The Review Committee will determine the extent to which the material meets the Objectives and Principles of Selection and the Criteria for Selection elsewhere in this document.

2) Educational Policies Service of the NSBA State: New Jersey

. . .Challenged materials will be reviewed in the light of Board-approved criteria for the selection of instructional materials, supplementary materials, or library books, as appropriate.

3) Iowa Department of Public Instruction

The sole criteria for the final decision is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use.

Part III. Reevaluation Procedures.
Statement indicating to whom the decision of the reevaluation committee is communicated

EXAMPLES

.1) Owatonna, Minnesota

D. The decision shall be communicated to all appropriate employees.

2) St. Cloud, Minnesota

e. The Review Committee will present a written decision to the staff member concerned, the unit administrator and the complainant.
f. The Review Committee will send copies of its decision to the appropriate district personnel and the Board of Education.

3) Iowa State Department of Public Instruction

The written decision and its justification shall be forwarded to the superintendent for appropriate action and to the complainant and the appropriate attendance centers.

Part III. Reevaluation.

Statement of whether the decision relates to one grade level, one school or the entire district

EXAMPLES

1) Owatonna, Minnesota

> C. The decision shall be binding for the individual school or as specified in the report by the reevaluation committee.

2) Gwinnett County, Georgia

> . . . The final decision on any item challenged . . . is binding only at the school where the complaint was initiated.

3) Iowa Department of Public Instruction

> Requests to reconsider materials which have previously been before the committee must receive approval of a majority of the committee members before the materials will again be reconsidered. Every reconsideration request form shall be acted upon by the committee.

4) Educational Policy Services/National School Boards Association - Wisconsin

> . . . Materials that have been reviewed following a formal complaint will not be reviewed again for three years unless a challenge is substantially different from a previous challenge. Individuals and groups who challenge an item that has been reviewed within the past three years will be given a copy of the review committee's recommendation, the superintendent's decision, and any Board decision in the matter. If the Board did not review the matter previously, the citizen may request a review by the Board . . .

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Appeal

Notice of right to appeal to the school board

Introduction

While school personnel expect that school boards will accept the decisions made by their committees, at times one or the other of the concerned parties will not be satisfied with the decision reached by the review committee, or will believe that inappropriate procedures have been followed. Whether the person bringing the concern is dissatisfied, or the school person selecting and using the educational resource is dissatisfied, the policy should indicate that the decision may be appealed to the school board.

Appeal

Notice of right to appeal to the school board

EXAMPLES

1) Owatonna, Minnesota

> F. The committee's decision may be appealed to the District 761 Board of Education.

2) St. Cloud, Minnesota

> I. Final Appeal
>
> If either the complainant, the certified staff or the unit administrator is not satisfied with this decision, a written appeal may be made directly to the Superintendent and School Board.

3) Gwinnett County, Georgia

> A. Appeals from the System Media Committee shall be directed in writing to the Superintendent and Board of Education.
>
> > 1. Appeals must be made within ten (10) working days after formal notification of the decision.
> >
> > . . .
>
> B. Once the complainant receives a positive decision after a hearing, he/she cannot continue to appeal at the next level. All requests for reconsideration can only be appealed to the next level. Such written appeals may be filed by the complainant, administration or parents who serve as interveners.

Intellectual Freedom Documents

Library Bill of Rights (American Library Association)
Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program (American Association of School Librarians)
Censorship Statement (International Reading Association)
Freedom to Read Statement (American Association of Publishers and American Library Association)
Freedom to Teach, to Learn, and to Express Ideas in the Public Schools (Minnesota State Board of Education)
Freedom to View (American Film and Video Association)
Statement on Intellectual Freedom (Association for Educational Communications and Technology)
Student's Right to Read (National Council of Teachers of English)

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgement of free expression and free access to ideas.

5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

6. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948
Amended February 2, 1969, June 27, 1967, and January 23, 1980
by the ALA Council

American Library Association

Note: Persons writing policies should be sure that the professional association documents attached to the policy are the latest revisions. Notice that this statement from the American Library Association has been revised several times. As newer revisions are adopted, they should be used.

Access to Resources and Services In the School Library Media Program

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The school library media program plays a unique role in promoting intellectual freedom. It serves as a point of voluntary access to information and ideas and as a learning laboratory for students as they acquire critical thinking and problem solving skills needed in a pluralistic society. Although the educational level and program of the school necessarily shape the resources and services of a school library media program, the principles of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS apply equally to all libraries, including school library media programs.

School library media professionals assume a leadership role in promoting the principles of intellectual freedom within the school by providing resources and services that create and sustain an atmosphere of free inquiry. School library media professionals work closely with teachers to integrate instructional activities in classroom units designed to equip students to locate, evaluate, and use a broad range of ideas effectively. Through resources, programming, and educational processes, students and teachers experience the free and robust debate characteristic of a democratic society.

School library media professionals cooperate with other individuals in building collections of resources appropriate to the developmental and maturity levels of students. These collections provide resources which support the curriculum and are consistent with the philosophy, goals, and objectives of the school district. Resources in school library media collections represent diverse points of view and current as well as historical issues.

While English is, by history and tradition, the customary language of the United States, the languages in use in any given community may vary. Schools serving communities in which other languages are used make efforts to accommodate the needs of students for whom English is a second language. To support these efforts, and to ensure equal access to resources and services, the school library media program provides resources which reflect the linguistic pluralism of the community.

Members of the school community involved in the collection development process employ educational criteria to select resources unfettered by their personal, political, social, or religious views. Students and educators served by the school library media program have access to resources and services free of

constraints resulting from personal, partisan, or doctrinal disapproval. School library media professionals resist efforts by individuals to define what is appropriate for all students or teachers to read, view, or hear.

Major barriers between students and resources include: imposing age or grade level restrictions on the use of resources, limiting the use of interlibrary loan and access to electronic information, charging fees for information in specific formats, requiring permissions from parents or teachers, establishing restricted shelves or closed collections, and labeling. Policies, procedures, and rules related to the use of resources and services support free and open access to information.

The school board adopts policies that guarantee students access to a broad range of ideas. These include policies on collection development and procedures for the review of resources about which concerns have been raised. Such policies, developed by persons in the school community, provide for a timely and fair hearing and assure that procedures are applied equitably to all expressions of concern. School library media professionals implement district policies and procedures in the school.

American Association of School Librarians

Adopted July 2, 1986; amended January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council

Note: Persons writing policies should be sure that the statements from professional organizations included in the policy are the currently endorsed statements. For example, many selection policies still include the School Library Bill of Rights. The School Library Bill of Rights is no longer an endorsed American Association of School Librarians document. It was rescinded in 1976 and replaced in 1986 with this interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights.

Freedom To Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove books from sale, to censor textbooks, to label "controversial" books, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens devoted to the use of books and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating them, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

We are deeply concerned about these attempts at suppression. Most such attempts rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary citizen, by exercising critical judgment will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow-citizens.

We trust Americans to recognize propaganda, and to reject it. We do not believe they need the help of censors to assist them in this task. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

We are aware, of course, that books are not alone in being subjected to efforts at suppression. We are aware that these efforts are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, films, radio, and television. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of uneasy change and pervading fear. Especially when so many of our apprehensions are directed against an ideology, the expression of a dissident idea becomes a thing feared in itself, and we tend to move against it as against a hostile deed, with suppression.

And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables

change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with stress.

Now as always in our history, books are among our greatest instruments of freedom. They are almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. They are the natural medium for the new ideas and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. They are essential to the extended discussion which serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures towards conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. <u>It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.</u>

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept which challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation contained in the books they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what books should be published or circulated.

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

A book should be judged as a book. No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish which draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

To some, much of modern literature is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not be be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters taste differs, and taste cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised which will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or author as subversive or dangerous.

The idea of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for the citizen. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about

the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive.

7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a bad book is a good one, the answer to a bad idea is a good one.

The freedom to read is of little consequence when expended on the trivial; it is frustrated when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of their freedom and integrity, and the enlargement of their service to society, requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all citizens the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of books. We do so because we believe that they are good, possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers. Adopted June 25, 1953. Revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

Freedom to View

The FREEDOM TO VIEW, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest possible access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.

2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.

3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.

4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, and other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.

5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

American Film and Video Association
Adopted 1979
Updated and approved, 1989

IRA Censorship Statement

The International Reading Association supports freedom of speech, thought and inquiry as guaranteed in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. Censorship infringes upon that freedom by denying individuals the right to select what they read and by limiting access to alternative points of views. Free inquiry is necessary to a democratic society.

In the spirit of freedom, members of the international Reading Association are committed to advancing reading comprehension and literacy at all ages and stages. Reading comprehension must go beyond literal understanding, to interpretation and evaluation of what is read. The First Amendment makes this critical perspective possible by permitting the publication of materials which represent diverse points of view. Helping students to develop this critical perspective, however, requires an enlightened educational program, with curricula that provide for:

(1) freedom to choose from a rich choice of classroom and library materials dealing objectively with many facets of a diverse society;
(2) freedom to discuss issues identified by such reading; and
(3) freedom to defend collective and individual positions against challenges from groups and individuals with different points of view.

IRA supports the rights of parents to monitor the materials that their children are required to read, and IRA believes that no students should be forced to read material which he or she finds morally offensive. IRA further believes, however, that formal channels should be established for handling criticisms of school materials, and that parents and others should use these channels when filing a complaint.

Many communities and institutions have found that the best defense against censorship comes from developing procedures for dealing with challenges before challenges actually occur. The use of standard procedures for text selection is essential for answering challenges of materials and for maintaining the right of students to select what they read. Such standard procedures should set forth policies for book selection in academic libraries and classrooms.

The determination of normal procedures for text selection should include development of the following:

(1) There should be policies for the selection of printed materials. These policies should be developed with input from community groups, including teachers, students, parents and civic leaders. Policies must be written and approved by appropriate governing bodies (boards of directors, trustees, etc.).
(2) There should be written guidelines for identifying and handling complaints.
(3) There should be a system for openly communicating with civic, religious, educational and political bodies in the community.
(4) There should be systematic methods for disseminating positive information about intellectual freedom through newspapers, radio and television.

Members of the International Reading Association must determine whether guidelines and procedures for selecting materials and answering challenges exist in their agencies and schools. If such guidelines do not exist, members should push for their adoption. There guidelines and procedures allow the school system to respond in a careful, considered manner to challenges against materials used in the schools. This can provide insurance against incidents which may inflame a community and endanger academic freedom.

International Reading Association

Academic Freedom: A Policy Statement

Social Studies in the Free Marketplace of Ideas

A diversity of points of view is essential to education in a democracy. Among the many reasons for this position are: (1) The "Free Marketplace of Ideas" is the source of raw material from which social and economic progress is created. All positions should be heard to that the best may be chosen. (2) Students should have an opportunity to consider and evaluate differing points of view in the classroom.

Therefore, it is incumbent upon every school administrator and social studies teacher to be vigilant in detecting encroachments upon diversity of viewpoints in the classroom and to be prepared to challenge successfully such threats.

It is recognized that citizens of a community have the right to examine and criticize school materials. In order to assist school personnel in handling complaints concerning social studies materials, procedures based on due process are recommended.

National Council for the Social Studies

Statement on Intellectual Freedom

The First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States is a cornerstone of our liberty, supporting our rights and responsibilities regarding free speech both written and oral.

The Association for Educational Communications and Technology believes this same protection applies also to the use of sound and image in our society.

Therefore, we affirm that:

Freedom of inquiry and access to information -- regardless of the format or viewpoints of the presentation -- are fundamental to the development of our society. These rights must not be denied or abridged because of age, sex, race, religion, national origin, or social or political views.

Children have the right to freedom of inquiry and access to information; responsibility for abridgement of that right is solely between an individual child and the parent(s) of that child.

The need for information and the interests, growth, and enlightenment of the user should govern the selection and development of educational media, not the age, sex, race, nationality, politics, or religious doctrine of the author, producer, or publisher.

Attempts to restrict or deprive a learner's access to information representing a variety of viewpoints must be resisted as a threat to learning in a free and democratic society. Recognizing that within a pluralistic society efforts to censor may exist, such challenges should be met calmly with proper respect for the beliefs of the challengers. Further, since attempts to censor sound and image material frequently arise out of misunderstanding of the rationale for using these formats, we shall attempt to help both user and censor to recognize the purpose and dynamics of communication in modern times regardless of the format.

The Association for Educational Communications and Technology is ready to cooperate with other persons or groups committed to resisting censorship or abridgement of free expression and free access to ideas and information.

Association for Educational Communications and Technology

A Policy on the Freedom to Teach, to Learn And to Express Ideas in the Public Schools

The freedoms to teach, to learn, and to express ideas without fear of censorship are fundamental rights held by public school teachers and students as well as all other citizens. These freedoms, expressed and guaranteed in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, must be preserved in the teaching/learning process in a society of diverse beliefs and viewpoints and shared freedoms. Public schools must promote an atmosphere of free inquiry and a view of subject matter reflecting a broad range of ideas so that students are prepared for responsible citizenship. However, criticism of educational resources and teaching methods and the advocacy of additional educational resources are also essential First Amendment rights of students, faculty, parents, and other members of the community.

Public school personnel should:

1) Select curriculum, teaching methods, resources, and materials appropriate to the educational objectives and the maturity and skill levels of the students based on their professional competence as educators and according to established school board policies and procedures. However, teachers should not be allowed to indoctrinate students with their own personal views.

2) Provide students with access to a broad range of ideas and viewpoints.

3) Encourage students to become decision makers, to exercise freedom of thought, and to make independent judgments through the examination and evaluation of relevant information, evidence, facts, and differing viewpoints.

4) Support students' rights to present their ideas even if some people might find the ideas objectionable.

5) Discuss issues, including those viewed by some as controversial, since such discussion is essential to students' development of critical thinking and other skills which prepare them for full participation as citizens in a democratic society.

Each school district board of education should adopt a written policy reflecting the principles included in this policy and stating the criteria, the personnel, and the process to be used to select and to reevaluate curriculum and educational resources and make the policy available to members of the school community and the public.

Individuals or groups outside the public schools should not be allowed to:

1) Use the public schools to indoctrinate students with particular viewpoints or beliefs.

2) Determine which viewpoints will be presented or avoided in the public schools.

3) Require the disciplining of professional staff for including issues or resources considered controversial in their classes if the reasons including them are educationally sound.

Adopted by the Minnesota Board of Education
March 12, 1985

Attached Forms

Statement of Concern about Library/Media Center Resources or
Reevaluation form used in the district
Report of Reevaluation Committee

STATEMENT OF CONCERN ABOUT LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER RESOURCES

(This is where you identify who in your own structure has authorized use of this form -- Director, Board of Trustees, Board of Education, etc. -- and to whom to return the form.)

Name_____Date_____

Address_____Phone_____

City_____State____Zip_____

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

_____Book	_____Audiovisual Resource
_____Magazine	_____Content of Library Program
_____Newspaper	_____Other

Title_____

Author/Producer_____

2. What brought this title to your attention?

3. Please comment on the resource as a whole as well as being specific about those matters which concern you. (Use other side if needed.) Comment:

Optional:

4. What resource(s) do you suggest to provide additional information on the topic?

EXAMPLE Owatonna, Minnesota

REPORT OF REEVALUATION COMMITTEE

Author:_____Type of Resource:_____

Title:_____

This decision was made on the_____day of_____19___.

Minority report is attached_____yes _____no

FINDINGS OF FACT:

DECISION:

The following committee members are in agreement with the above decision:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

The following committee members are not in agreement with the above decision:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

EXAMPLE St. Cloud, Minnesota

Complaint Procedure

When materials contained in the Resource Center collection are challenged as to merit, they will be carefully reviewed in the light of specific objections which have been raised. A complaint form will be sent to the complainant, together with a brief letter, by the principal or administrator in charge of the unit concerned. Completed copies will be sent to the teacher involved, the Director of Media Services, the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, and the Superintendent.

Procedure: (1) upon receipt of completed form, send copies to Director or Instructional Services, Director of Media Services, department chairperson, and teacher for written comments. (2) then hold discussion if necessary, (3) return phone call or confirming letter to complainant within one week, (4) send copies to same group.

Dear _____:

Thank you for your letter (call) of _____ in which you questioned the usage of _____ in our schools. We appreciate your concern and wish to assure you that we will give the matter serious consideration.

I am sure you understand the complexity of providing materials suitable to the maturity, needs, interests, and abilities of all students on all grade levels. It is a continuous task of reevaluation, and an important responsibility that often requires direction and guidance from the parents of our students.

In order that we may fully understand your position on the materials in question, we ask you to fill out and return the enclosed form. I assure you we will give it immediate consideration and contact you in the very near future.

Sincerely,

_____
Administrator

Additional Resources

Adams, Helen R. School Media Policy Development: A Practical Process for Small Districts. Littleton, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited, 1986.

Burress, Lee and Edward B. Jenkinson. Students' Right to Know. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1982.

Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs. Chicago: American Association of School Librarians and Washington, D.C: Association for Educational Communications and Technology, 1988.

Karpisek, Marian. Policymaking for School Library Media Programs. Chicago: American Library Association, 1989.

McDonald, Frances M. "Another Look at Selection Policies and Procedures." In School Library Media Annual 1987, Vol. 5 eds. Shirley L. Aaron and Pat R. Scales. Littleton, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited, 1987.

Office for Intellectual Freedom. Intellectual Freedom Manual. 3rd Edition. Chicago: American Library Association, 1983.

"Selection of Instructional Materials: A Model Policy and Rules." Des Moines, Iowa: Department of Public Instruction, State of Iowa, 1980.

Notes